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CURRENT AFFAIRS



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Ramsay Hunt Syndrome



- Recently pop singer Justin Bieber has been affected by 'Ramsay Hunt syndrome'.

Ramsay Hunt Syndrome:

- Ramsay Hunt syndrome, also known as 'herpes zoster oticus', is a viral infection of the 'geniculate ganglion' (7th cranial nerve) of the facial nerve, which occurs when the infection affects the facial nerves does.
- This causes the nerves to become inflamed, so they lose their ability to function, causing temporary facial paralysis.
- There are 12 cranial nerves in the body. Ramsay Hunt syndrome is a viral infection that affects the 7th cranial nerve, which is involved in facial movements.

- Only five to 10 out of every 100,000 people are affected by Ramsay Hunt syndrome each year, making it an extremely rare disorder.

Cause:

- Ramsay Hunt syndrome is caused by reactivation of the varicella zoster virus, which has previously caused chickenpox and shingles in the patient.
- This virus belongs to the herpesvirus group which can be found in the body as a latent infection.
- The varicella zoster virus can reactivate due to a weakening of the immune system.
- Although it is not a contagious disease, it may cause chickenpox in people who have not been vaccinated against the disease.

Symptoms:

- The disease starts as red colored patches which become the cause of inflammation in the rash of the patches. Sometimes the rash can affect the eardrum, ear canal, ear lobe, tongue and mouth along with the affected nerve.

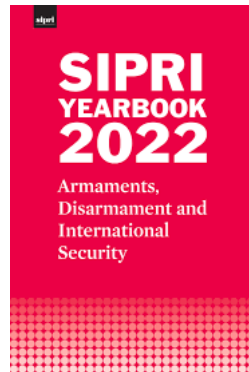
Remedy:

- Antiviral therapy and corticosteroids (anti-inflammatory drugs) are commonly used to treat this condition.

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SIPRI Yearbook 2022



- Recently the 'SIPRI Yearbook 2022' report was released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which assesses the current status of weapons, disarmament and international security.

SIPRI:

- It is an international institute dedicated to research in war, armaments, arms control and disarmament.
- It was established in the year 1966 in Stockholm (Sweden).
- It provides data, data analysis and recommendations based on transparent sources to policy makers, researchers, media and informed citizens.

Nuclear weapon:

Global Scenario:

- Nine nuclear-armed countries—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)—continue to modernize their nuclear arsenals, although between January 2021 and January 2022 the total number of nuclear weapons has declined slightly, but will likely increase over the next decade.

India:

- India had 160 nuclear warheads as of January 2022 and appears to be expanding its nuclear arsenal.

- Nuclear weapons are the explosive heads of missiles or torpedoes that use nuclear energy.
- India's nuclear stockpile increased from 156 in January 2021 to 160 in January 2022.

China:

- Like in January 2021, China had 350 nuclear weapons in January 2022 as well.
- India does not share official data on its nuclear arsenal.
- Russia and the US together have more than 90% nuclear weapons.

Major arms importers:

- SIPRI identified 164 states as major arms importers in 2016-20.

Country wise:

- The five largest arms importers were Saudi Arabia, India, Egypt, Australia and China, accounting for 36% of total arms imports.

Region wise:

- The regions that received the largest amounts of major arms supplies in 2016-20 were Asia and Oceania, accounting for 42% of global total supplies, followed by the Middle-East which received 33%.

Major Weapons Suppliers:

- The United States, Russia, France, Germany and China accounted for a total of 76% of major arms exports from 2016 to 2020, the five largest supplier countries.

Important Steps in Nuclear Diplomacy:

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW):

- The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) came into force in January 2021 after receiving the ratification of the required 50 countries.

New Star:

- The US-Russia arms control agreement New START treaty was extended for five years.

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA):

- Re-engage at the start of negotiations on the United States returning to the Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons:

- The Nuclear-Armed Permanent Members (P5) of the United Nations Security Council reaffirmed their commitment to non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control agreements and commitments as well as to abide by their obligations under the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Barriers to Nuclear Diplomacy:

- All P5 members continue to expand or modernize their nuclear arsenals and appear to be increasing the importance of nuclear weapons in their military strategies.
- Russia has also openly threatened the use of nuclear weapons in the context of the war in Ukraine.
- The war has stalled bilateral Russia-USA strategic stability talks and no other nuclear-rich state is abiding by arms control talks.
- In addition, the P5 members of the UNSC have voiced their opposition to the TPNW and the JCPOA negotiations have not yet reached a conclusion.

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